



Palm Sunday Ambush

20 March 2005





aka Battle of Salman Pak





aka

Battle of Bismarck





1075th Medium Truck

M915





“Heavy Lift” Contract

“White Trucks”





"Heavy Lift" Contract Drivers





518th Gun Truck Company



Level 2 HMMWV Gun Trucks Escorts





623rd FA (Stallion 33)

Escorting AAFES Convoy





617th MP Company (Raven 42) Shadowing AAFES Convoy





Enemy Situation



Estimated forty to fifty insurgents set up a complex ambush to cause US casualties with the possible intent to capture US Forces. The ambush included:

- Heavy small arms fire from hasty positions
 - Armor-piercing rounds and sniper weapons augmented attack
- An IED placed in the road median
- Road obstacles
 - A SUV blocked road
 - Median contained a mud ditch which fixed convoy
- Accurate indirect RPG fire, to include the use of the OG7V, with direct hits to trucks
- A ground assault by 10-15 insurgents
- Insurgents captured were carrying handcuffs
- **Enemy Losses**
 - 26 killed in ambush
 - 7 wounded and 1 unwounded insurgent captured
 - US Forces found 6 RPGs, 16 Rockets, 15 Machine Guns, 22 Assault Rifles, more than 2,900 rounds and 40 hand grenades



The map shows Iraq with various cities and regions labeled. A red circle is drawn around Baghdad. A red line connects Baghdad to the Scania aircraft. Other aircraft locations are marked with colored squares and labeled with codes: USA05897 (red), USA02017 (green), USA07860 (blue), and USA0997 (green). The map also shows the Taji Air Field and the Baghdad International Airport (BIAP).



617th MPs Had Turned Down Access Road





Found Egress Vehicles





MPs dismounted to fight



MPs on the Access Road



Southbound Convoy

Northbound Convoy



SSG Nein's M1114 617th MP





SSG Nein's M1114 617th MP

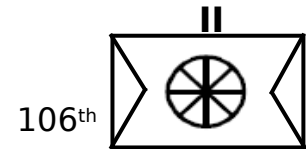




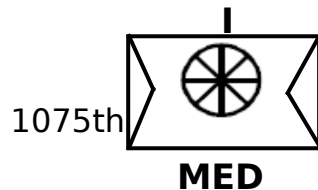
Background of the Northbound Convoy



- Mission: 1075th TC CO executes Iraqi Express mission to Theater Distribution Center at LSA Anaconda 20 March 2005.
- Convoy Organization:
 - Convoy Commander SSG Uhl (1075th)
 - 6 x M915/872s
 - 2 x M915 bobtails
 - 3 HMMWV Convoy Escort Platforms
 - 20 x IAP Tractor-Trailer Systems
 - 2 x IAP bobtails
 - 518th Convoy Escort Company (P) escort SSG Vanroeckel (Call Sign Regulator)
 - 3 HMMWV Convoy Escort Platforms
- Chronology
 - 19 March: Convoy picks up loads at TDC and arrives at Scania
 - 20 March: Convoy departs Scania enroute to LSAA via ASR Kiev/Bismark
 - 1125: Ambush Begins
 - 1210: Enemy Neutralized



106th



1075th

MED



518th

CEP



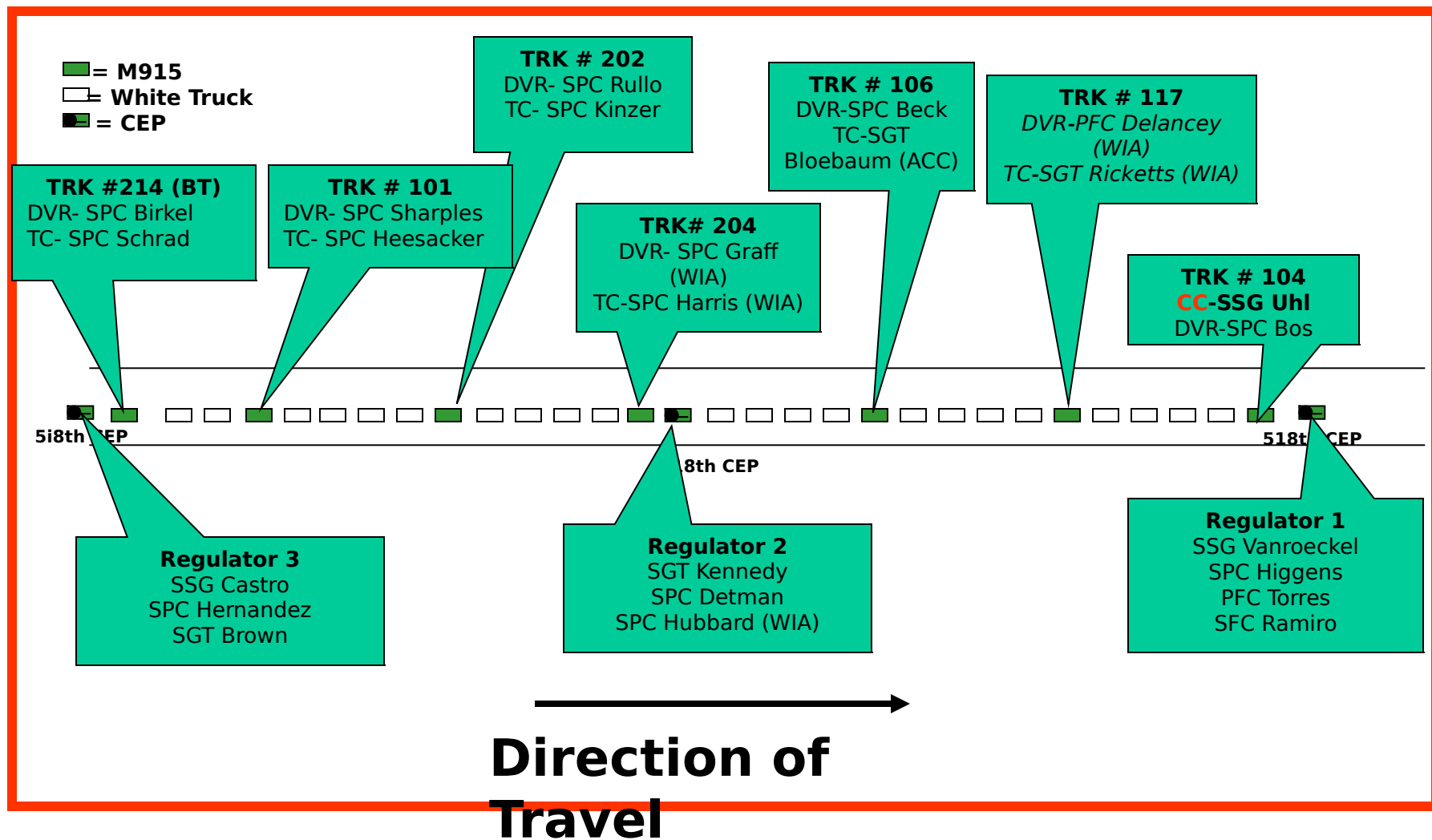
Battle Chronology



- Convoy Schematic Diagram
- Battlefield sketches
 - Initial Activity
 - Lead Vehicle Advances
 - Bus IED'd
 - CEP moves into Kill Zone
 - Rear of convoy under attack
 - CEP withdrawal
 - RPG Grenade Attack
 - Trucks begin exiting kill zone
 - CEP Advance
 - Convoy receives fire from right side
 - Casualties moved
 - Video clip of casualty being moved
 - KYNG Soldier Recovery
 - Casualty recovery
 - Convoy moves out
 - AT4 fired
 - Ground Assault
 - KYNG Soldier evacuated
 - SPC Hubbard evacuated
- Pictures



1075th Convoy Schematic Diagram





AAFES Convoy Hit in Southbound Lane





Lead Vehicle Advances



X = Dismounted Enemy

■ = M915

□ = White Truck

■ = Gun Truck

■ = Civilian Vehicle

N

Warehouse

Warehouse

Cond
o

Cond
o

Power Plant

Two Story House

-A SUV from the southbound lane attempts to block Trk #104

-Trk 104 spins the SUV and leaves the killzone without any whites following

Truck #104

DRV-SPC Bos

TC-SSG Uhl (CC)



SUV careened into opposite lane
momentarily blocking lead M915





Bus IED'd



X = Dismounted Enemy

■ = M915

□ = White Truck

■ = Gun Truck

■ = Civilian Vehicle

Warehouse

Warehouse

Cond
o

Cond
o

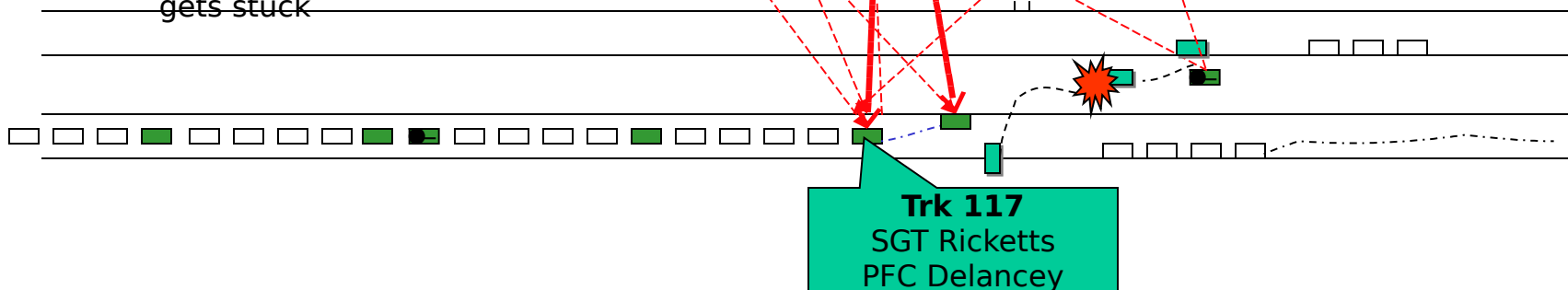
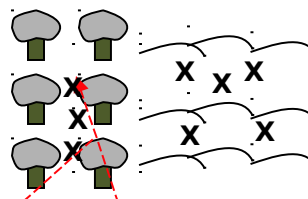
Power Plant

-AAFES Bus IED'd, lands in front of truck 117

-Truck 117 swerves to miss bus and gets stuck

-SGT Ricketts shot in leg shortly after truck gets stuck

Two Story House





AAFES Bus Tried to Clear Kill Zone Hit by an IED





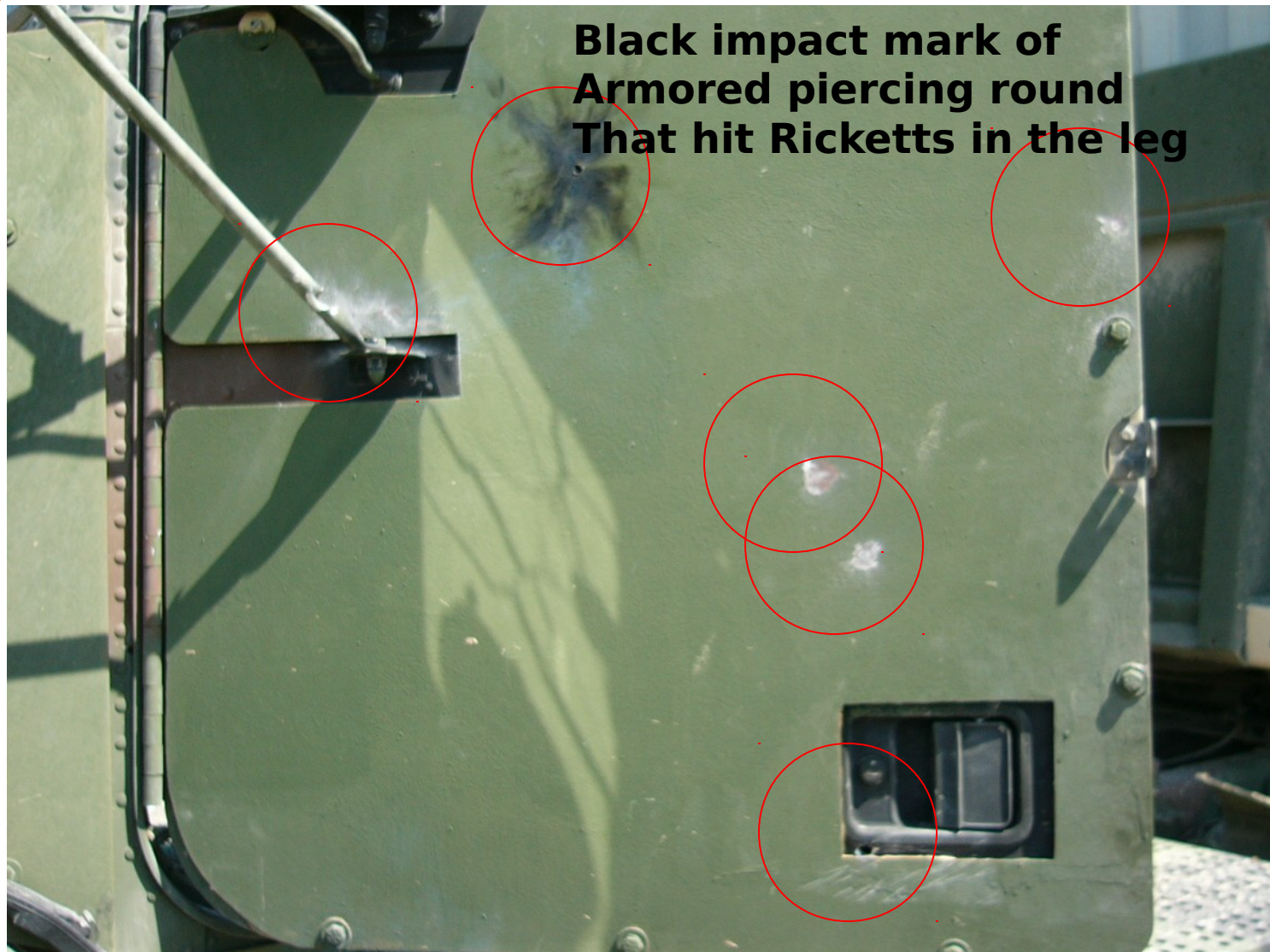
Ricketts was Wounded in Leg





Impact of enemy rounds on Ricketts' M915





**Black impact mark of
Armored piercing round
That hit Ricketts in the leg**

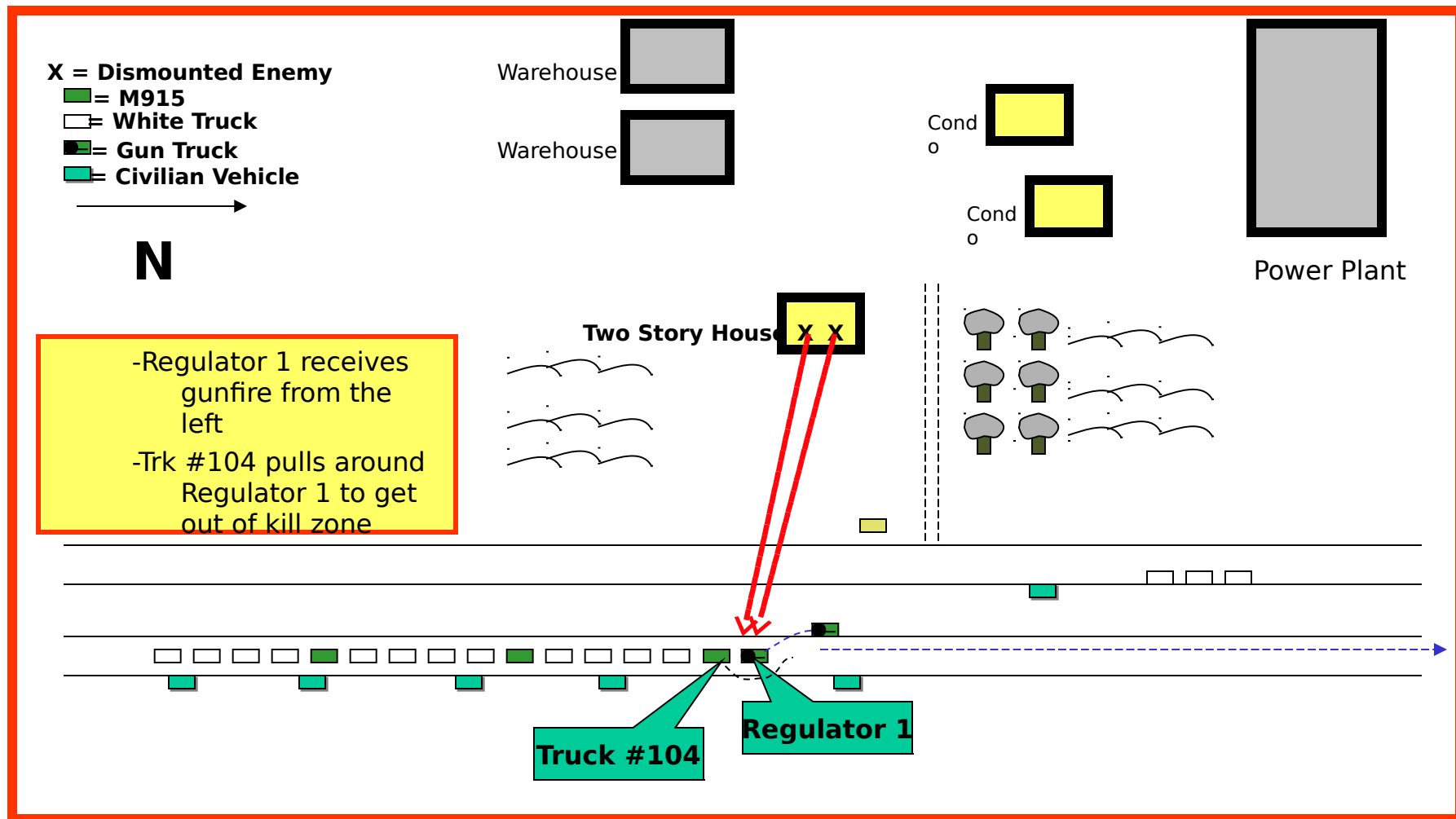


Northbound Convoy Blocked



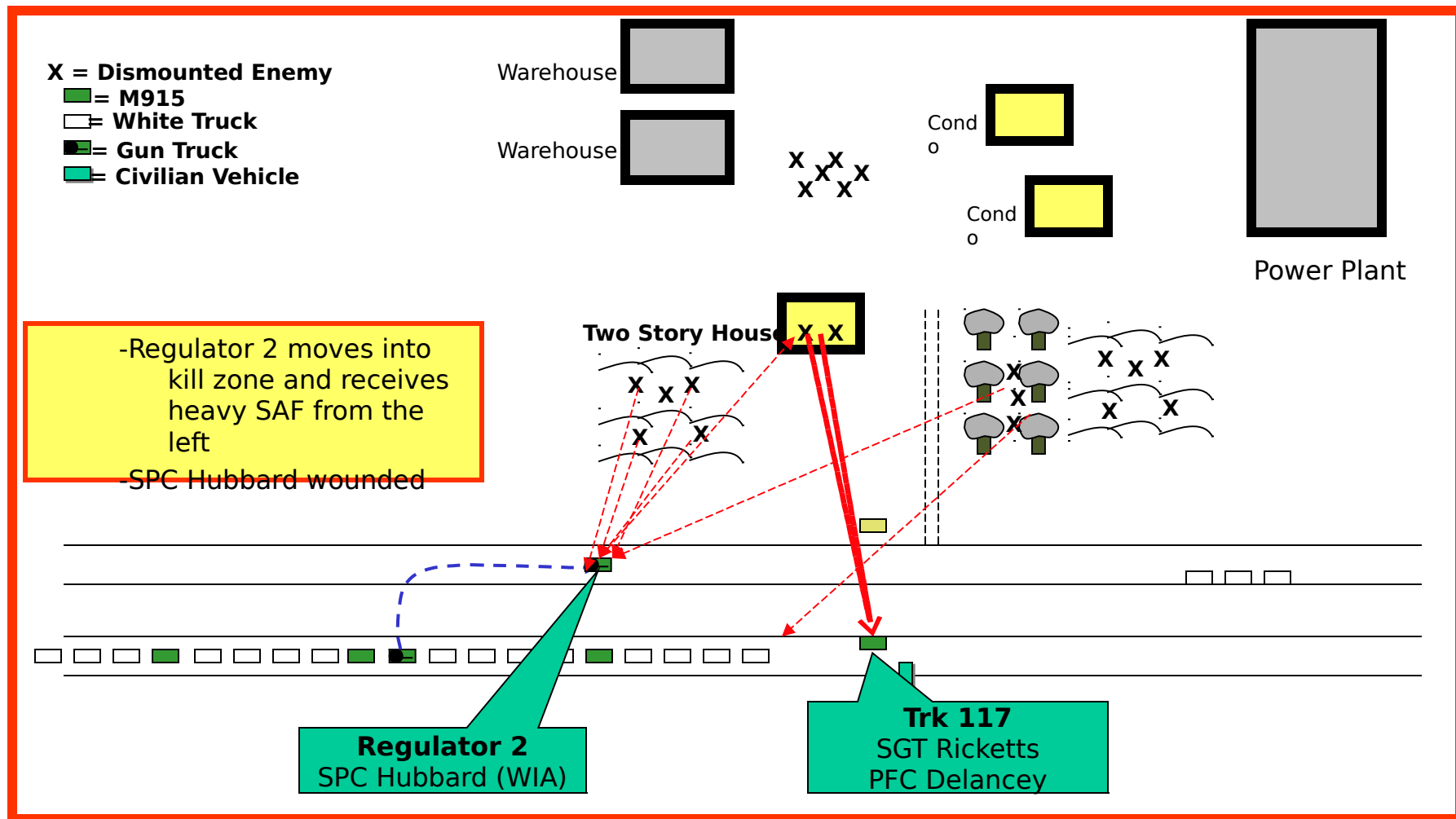


Initial Activity



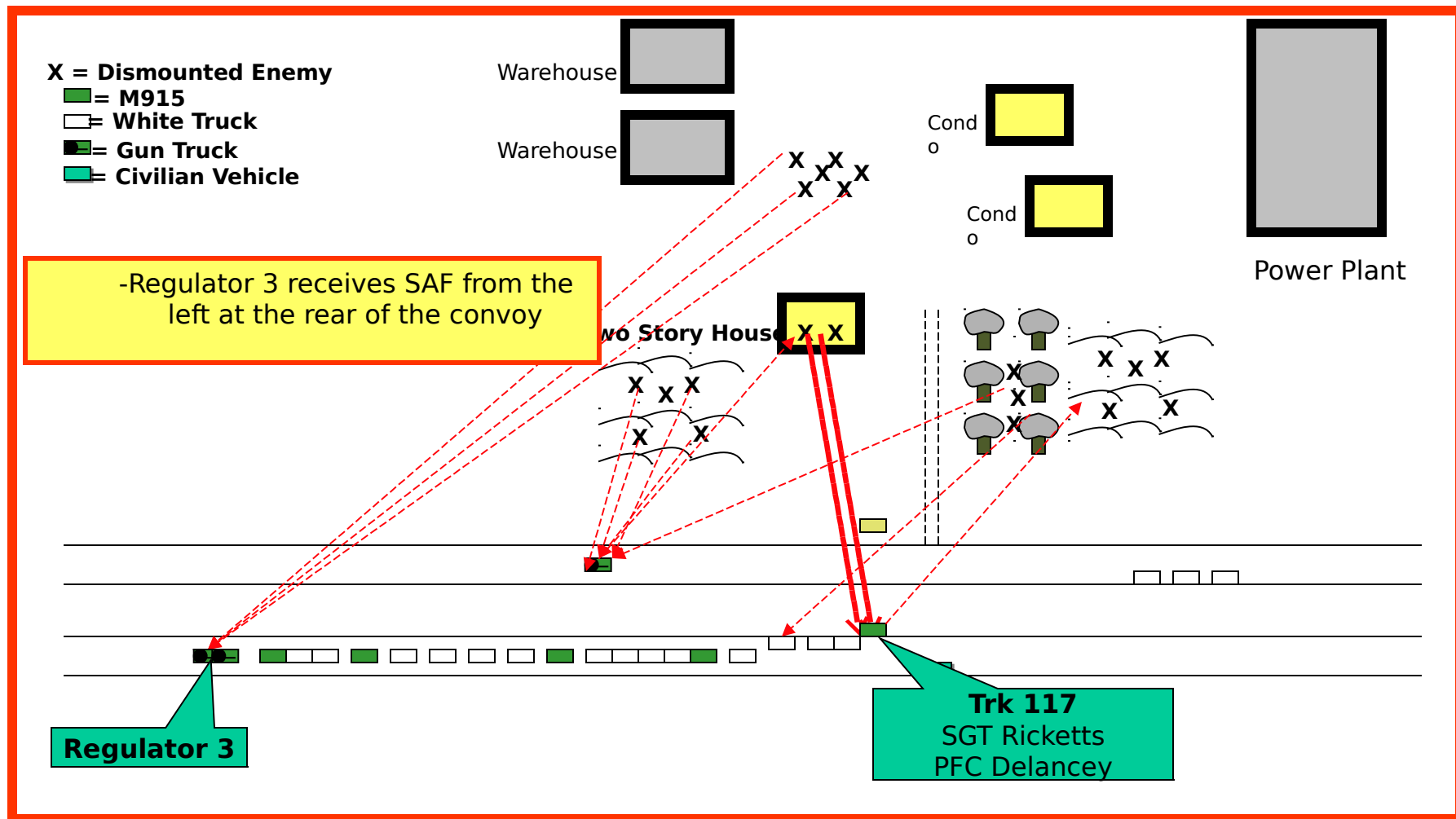


CEP moves into Kill zone



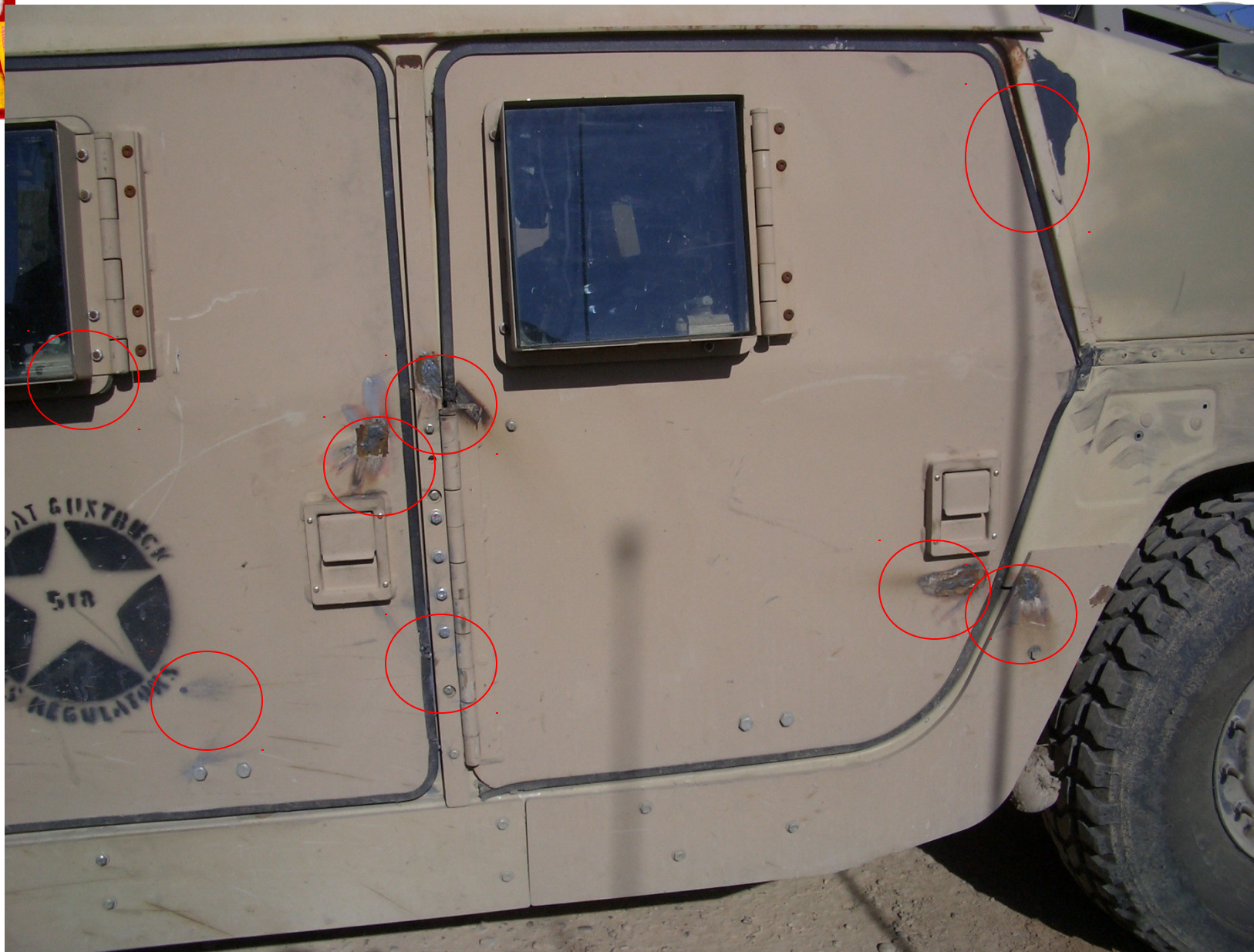


Rear of convoy under attack



Regulator 2







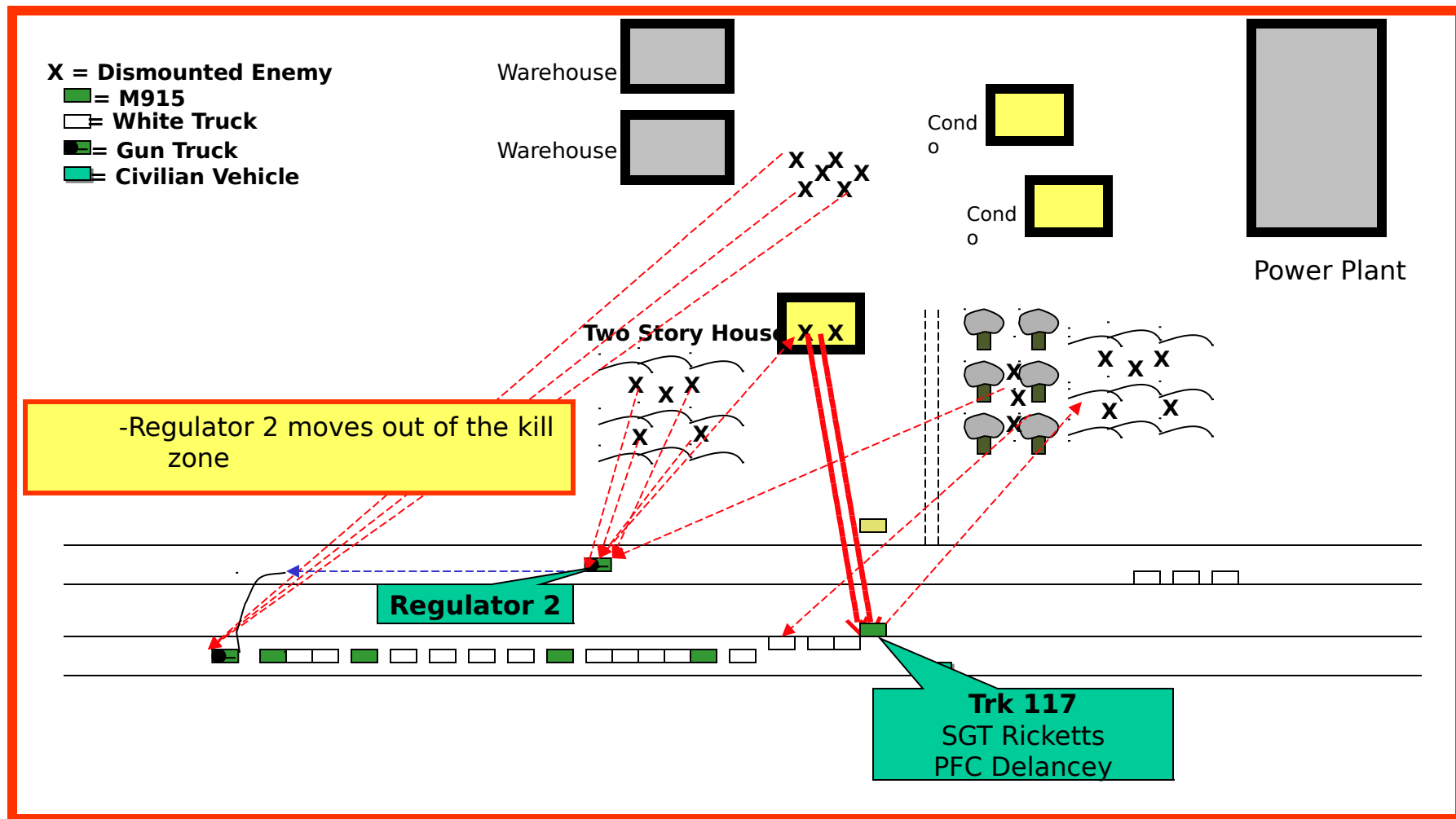
Fire Extinguisher

“Regulator 2”



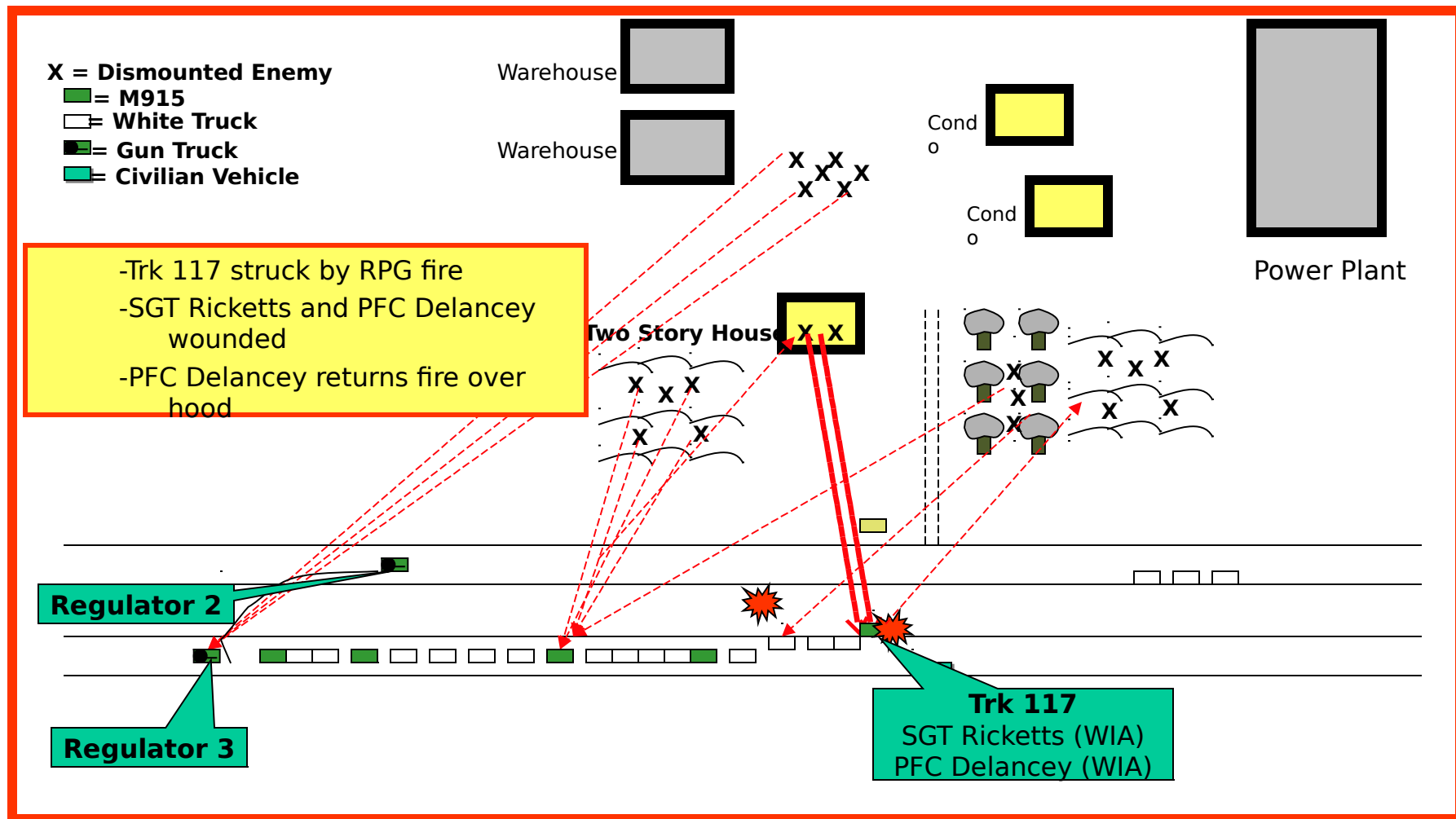


CEP withdrawal





Truck hit by RPG fire





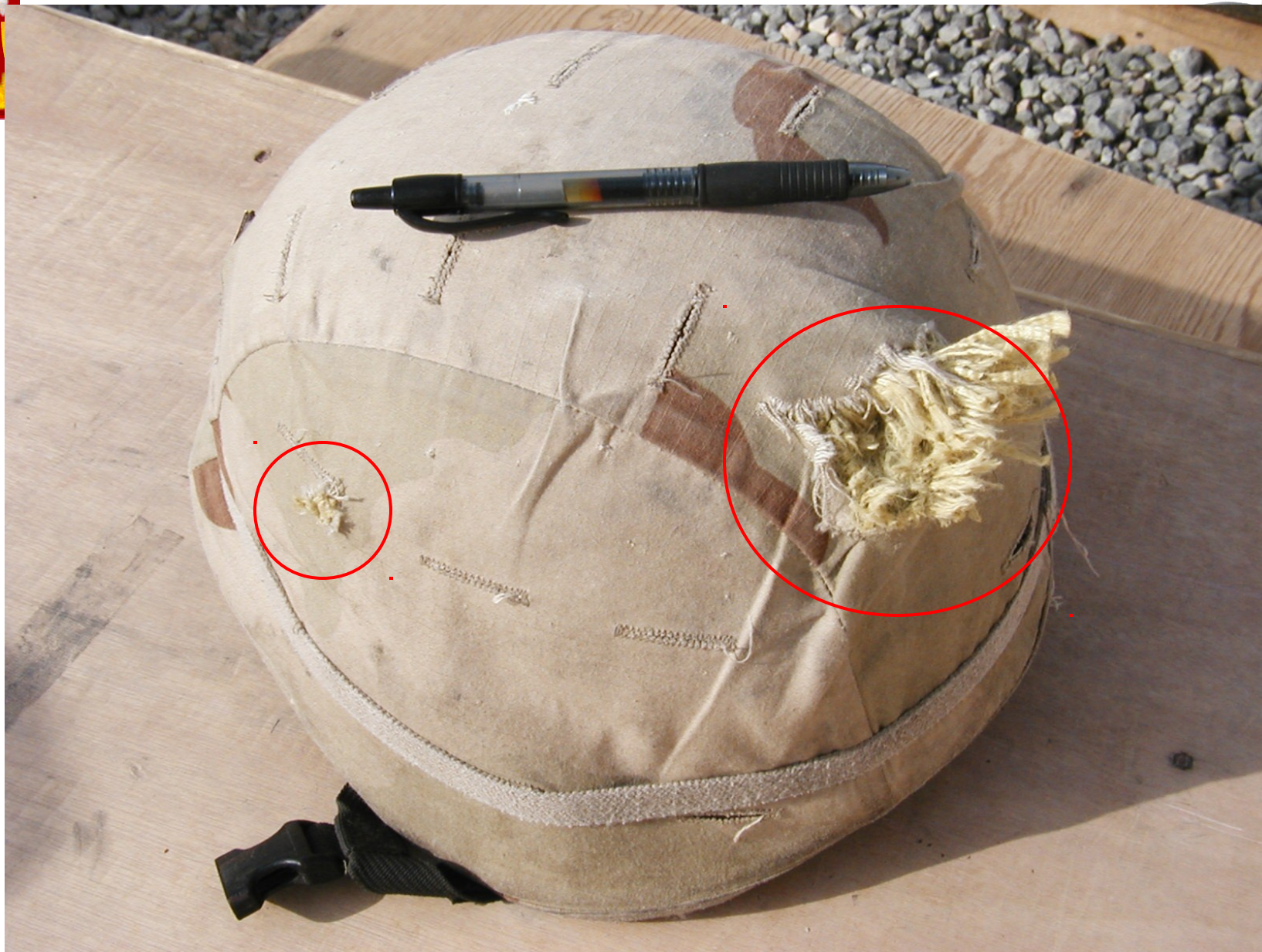
RPG Hit Passenger Side of Ricketts' Truck





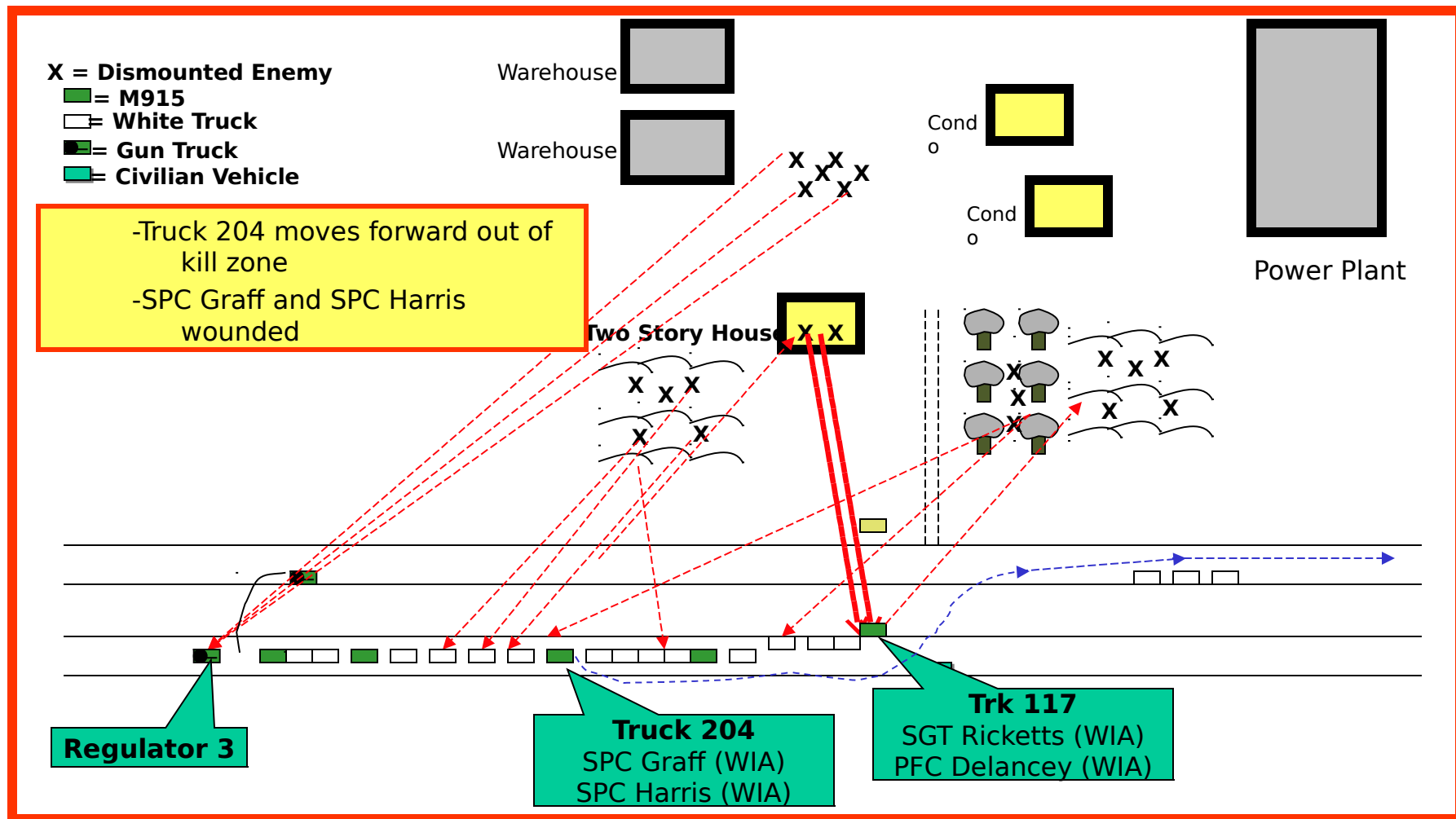
SPC Delancy







Trucks move out of kill zone





CEP Advance

X = Dismounted Enemy

■ = M915

□ = White Truck

■ = Gun Truck

■ = Civilian Vehicle

Warehouse

Warehouse

Cond
o

Cond
o

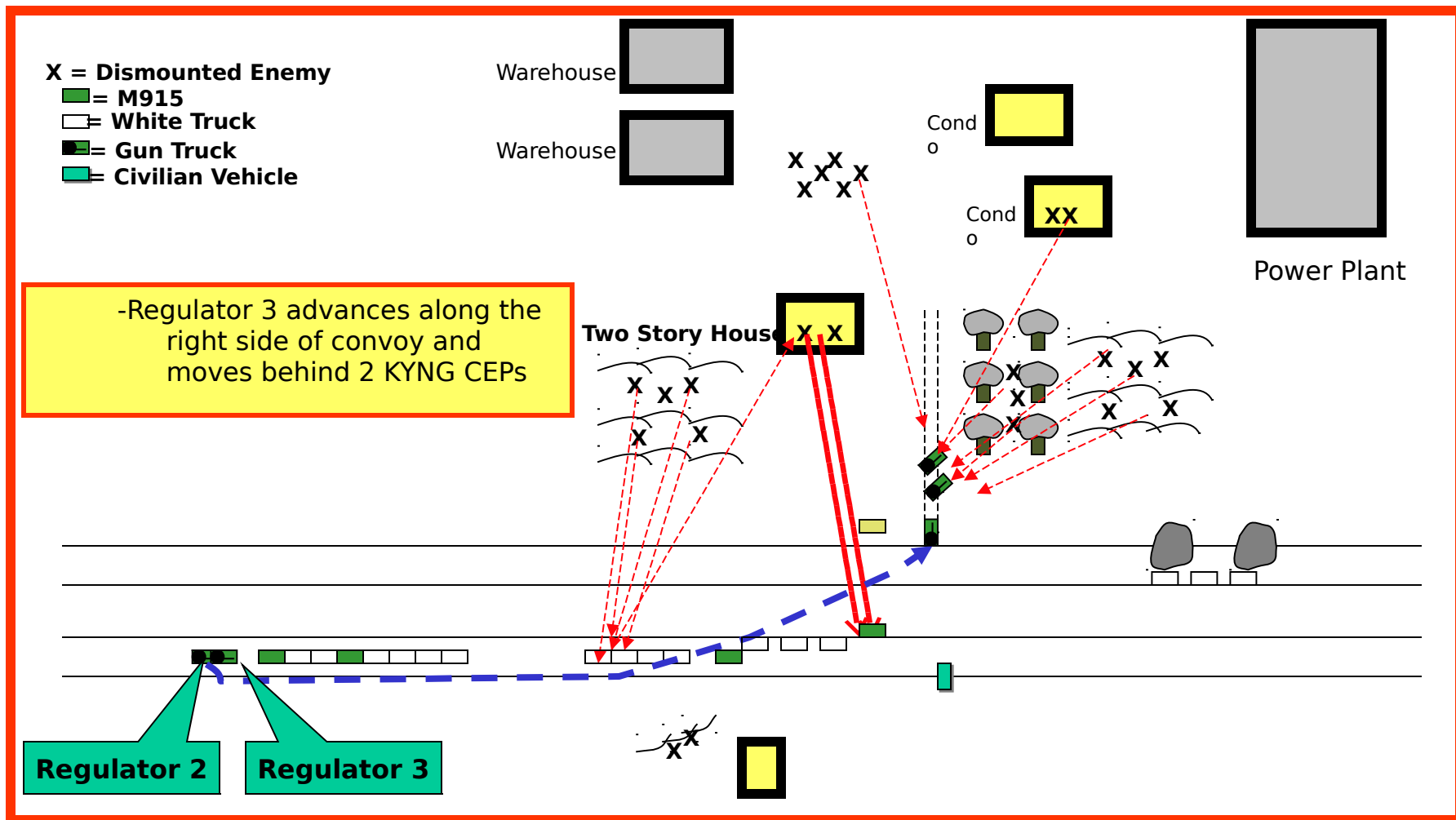
Power Plant

-Regulator 3 advances along the right side of convoy and moves behind 2 KYNG CEPs

Two Story House

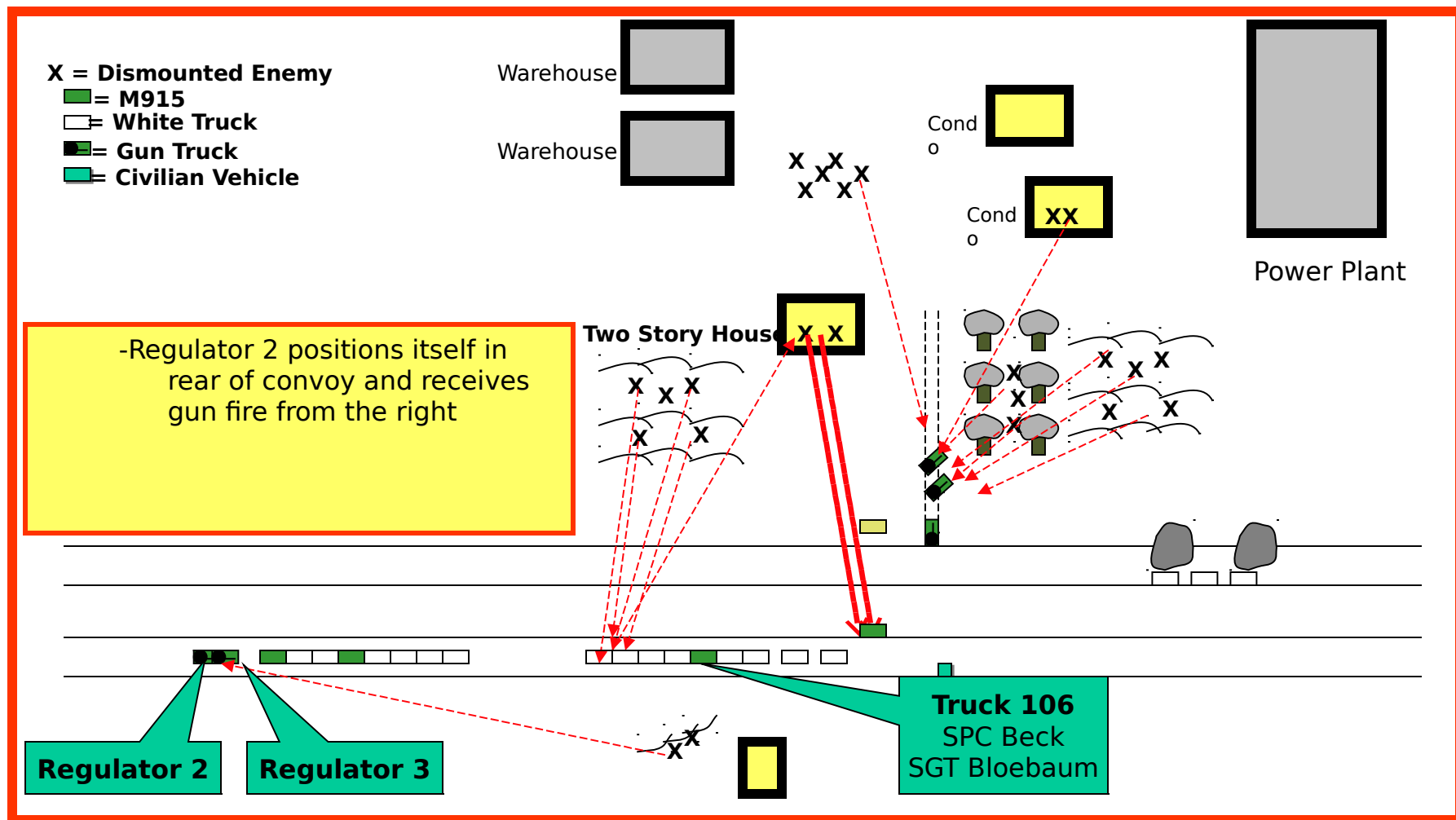
Regulator 2

Regulator 3





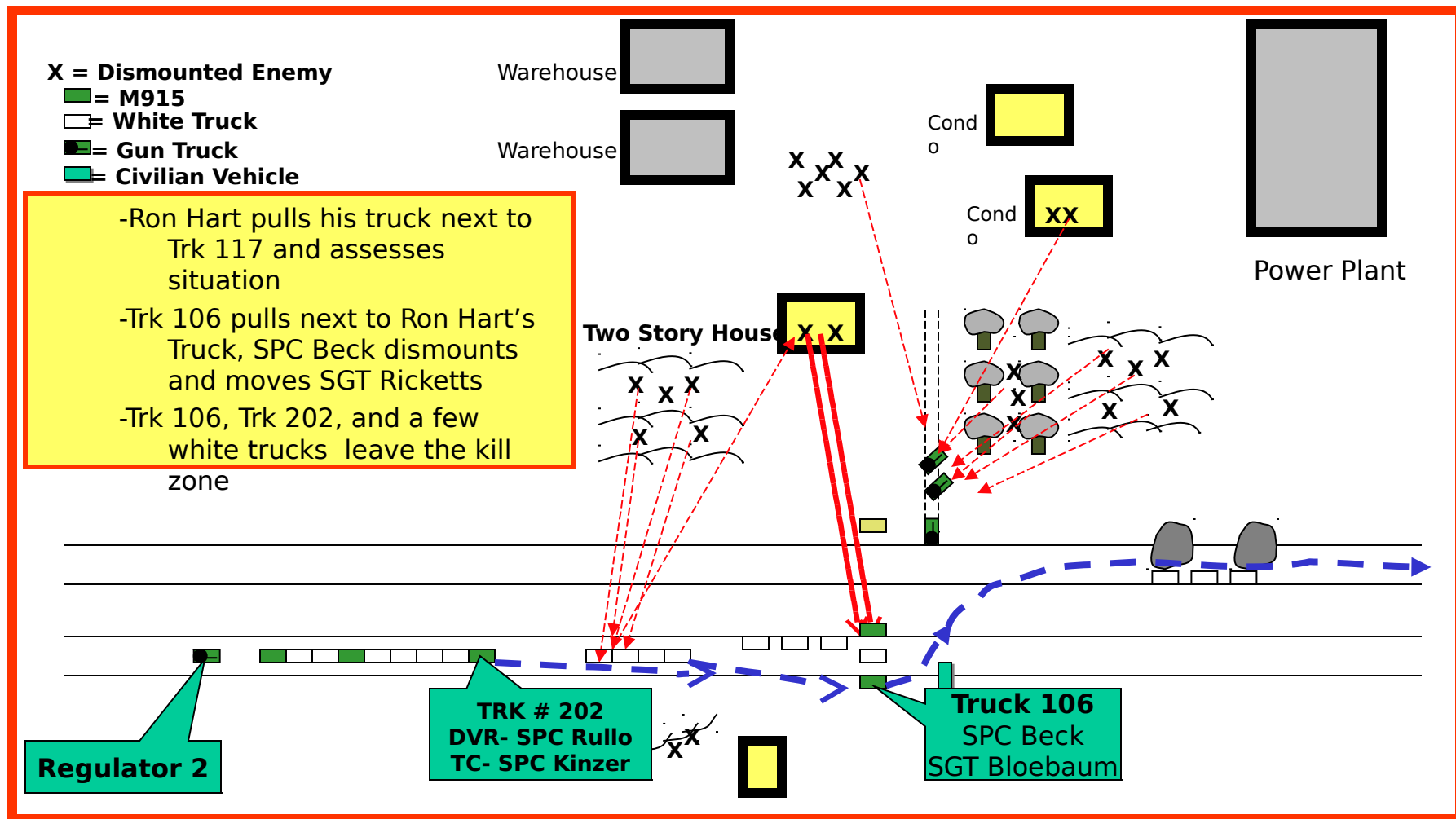
Convoy engaged from the right





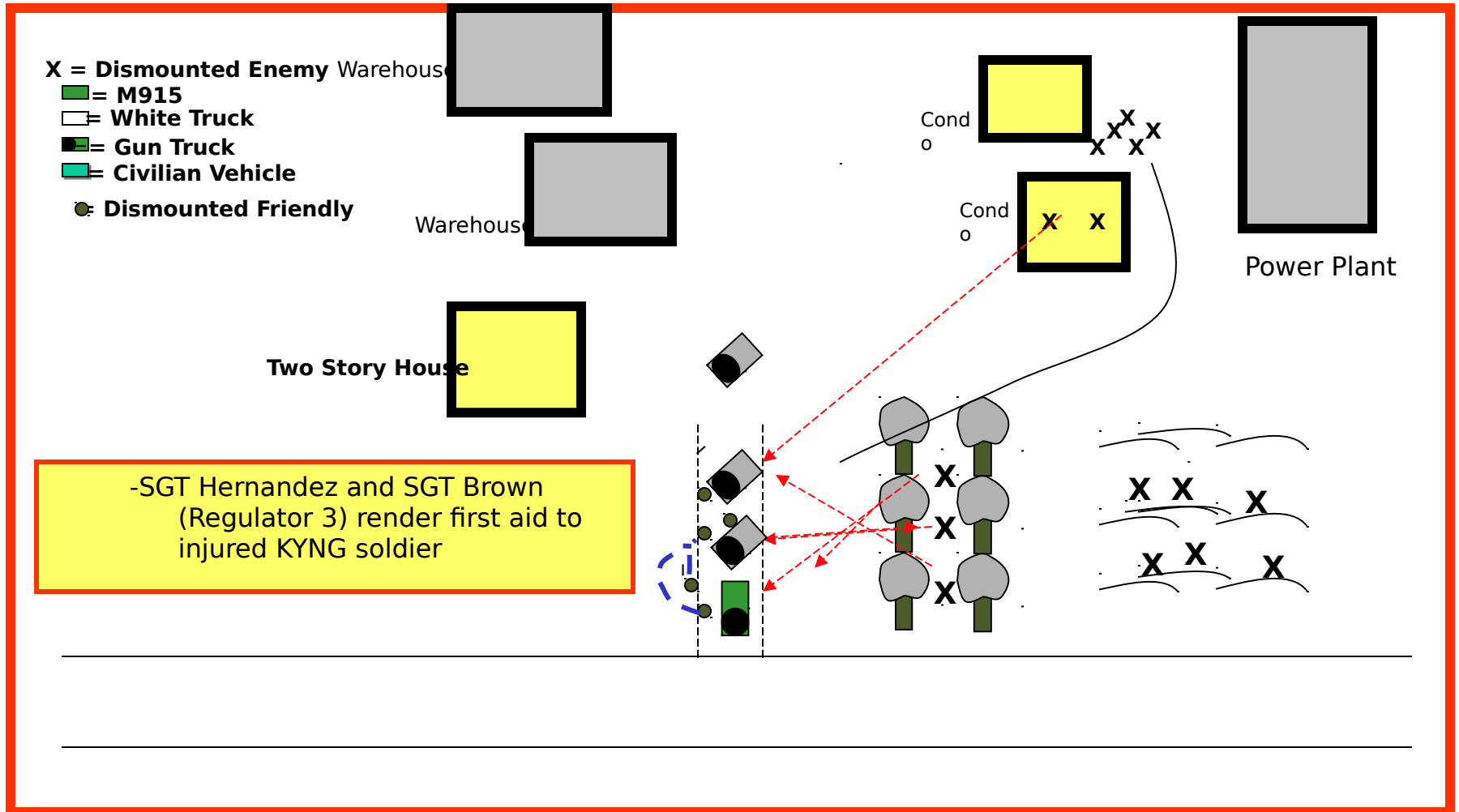


Casualties moved





KYNG Soldier recovery

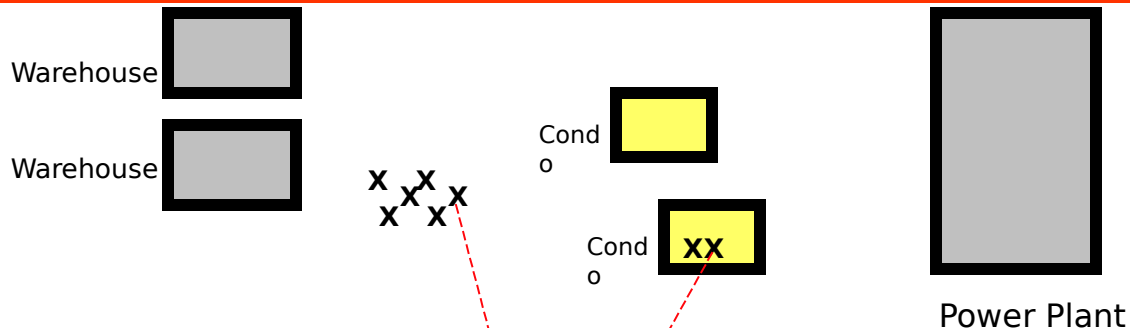




Casualty Recovery



- X = Dismounted Enemy
- = M915
- = White Truck
- = Gun Truck
- = Civilian Vehicle
- = Dismounted Friendly



-SPC Schrad and Regulator 2 neutralize enemy position as SPC Birkel and SPC Sharples run to front of convoy under fire and places SGT Ricketts in Ron Hart's truck

Regulator 2

Truck 214
SPC Schrad
SPC Birkel

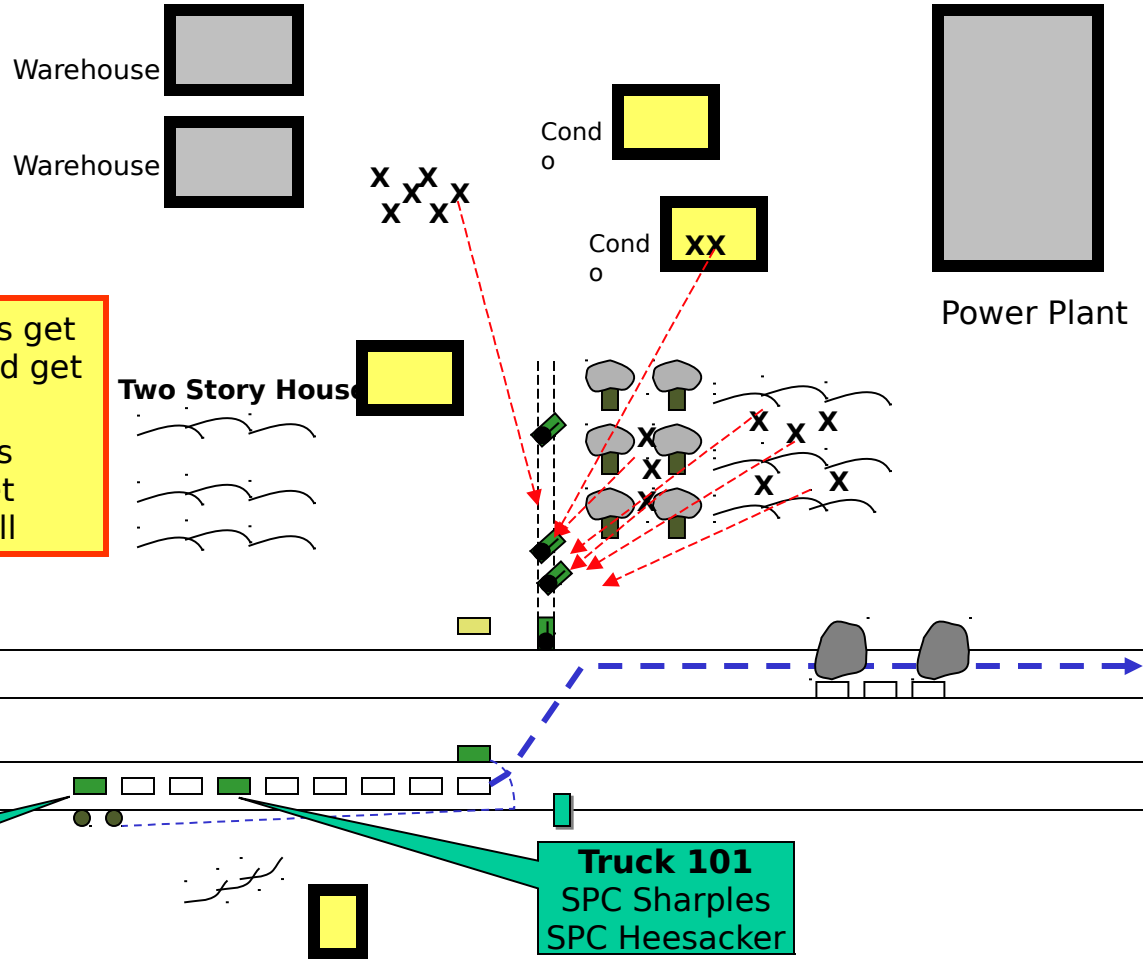
Truck 101
SPC Sharples
SPC Heesacker



Rest of Convoy Moves Out



- X = Dismounted Enemy
- = M915
- = White Truck
- = Gun Truck
- = Civilian Vehicle
- = Dismounted Friendly





AT4 fired

X = Dismounted Enemy Warehouse

■ = M915

□ = White Truck

■ = Gun Truck

■ = Civilian Vehicle

● = Dismounted Friendly

Warehouse

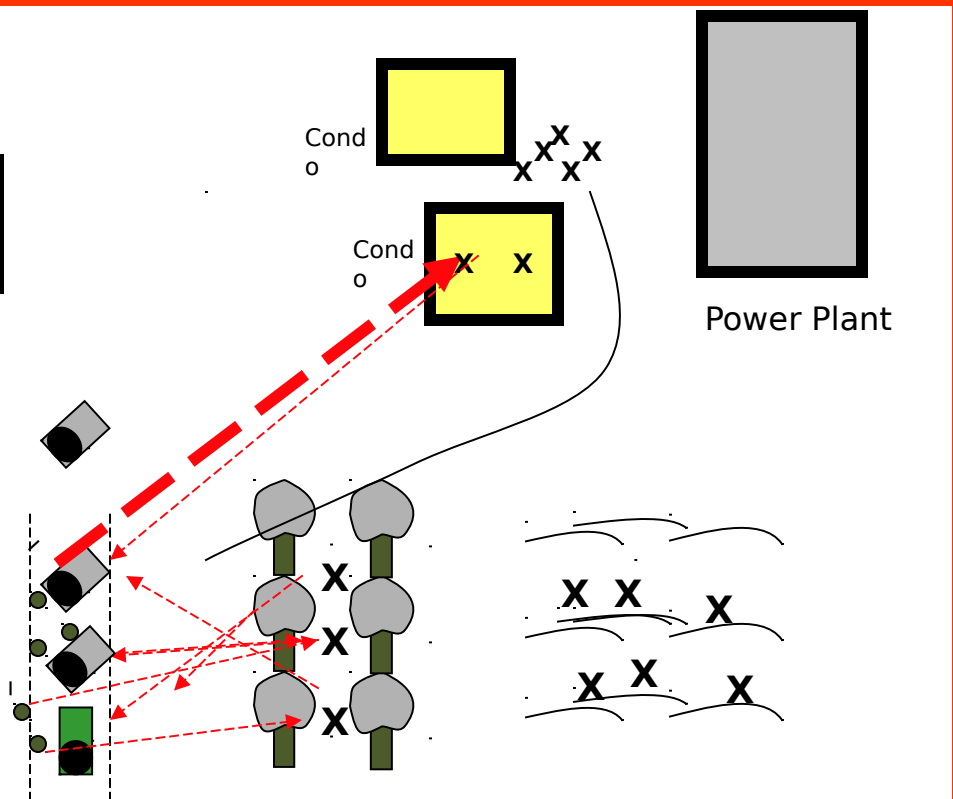
Two Story House

Cond
o

Cond
o

Power Plant

- After rendering aid to injured KYNG soldier, SGT Hernandez and SGT Brown take defensive positions
- KYNG soldier fires AT4, neutralizing enemy position in building





Ground Assault



X = Dismounted Enemy Warehouse

■ = M915

□ = White Truck

■ = Gun Truck

■ = Civilian Vehicle

● = Dismounted Friendly

Warehouse

Two Story House

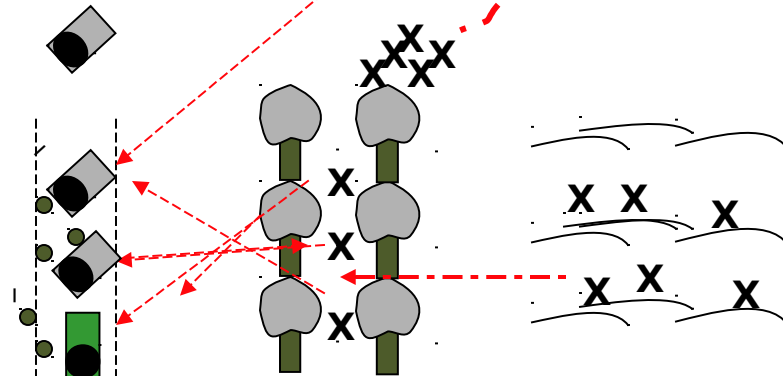
Cond
o

Cond
o

Power Plant

- Ten to fifteen insurgents charge
CEPs but are repelled by
dismounted soldiers

-SGT Brown is base of fire of
counter-ambush with a M249
SAW





Captured Enemy Weapons





KYNG Soldier Evacuated



X = Dismounted Enemy

■ = M915

□ = White Truck

■ = Gun Truck

■ = Civilian Vehicle

● = Dismounted Friendly

-SGT Hernandez drives KYNG CEP with injured soldier to South CCP and returns to area

Warehouse

Warehouse

Cond
o

Cond
o X

Power Plant

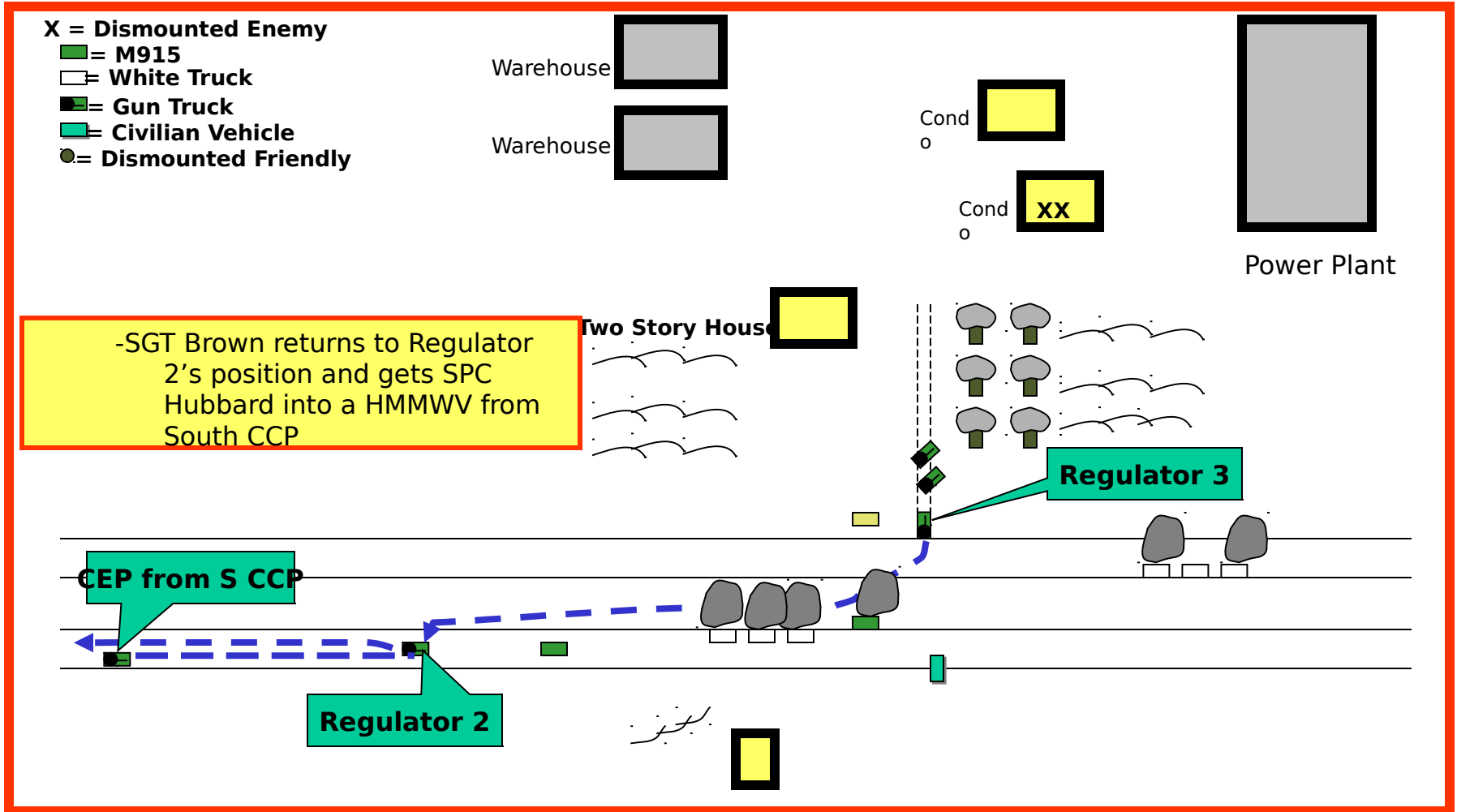
Two Story House

Regulator 3

Regulator 2



SPC Hubbard Evacuated





Consolidation and Reorganization



- X = Dismounted Enemy
- = M915
- = White Truck
- = Gun Truck
- = Civilian Vehicle
- = Dismounted Friendly

- SGT Hernandez rejoins Regulator 3 at attack site
- Regulator 2 and 3 move out of killzone and meet up with convoy at North CCP
- Remaining portion of convoy rolls out of kill zone

Warehouse

Warehouse

Cond
o

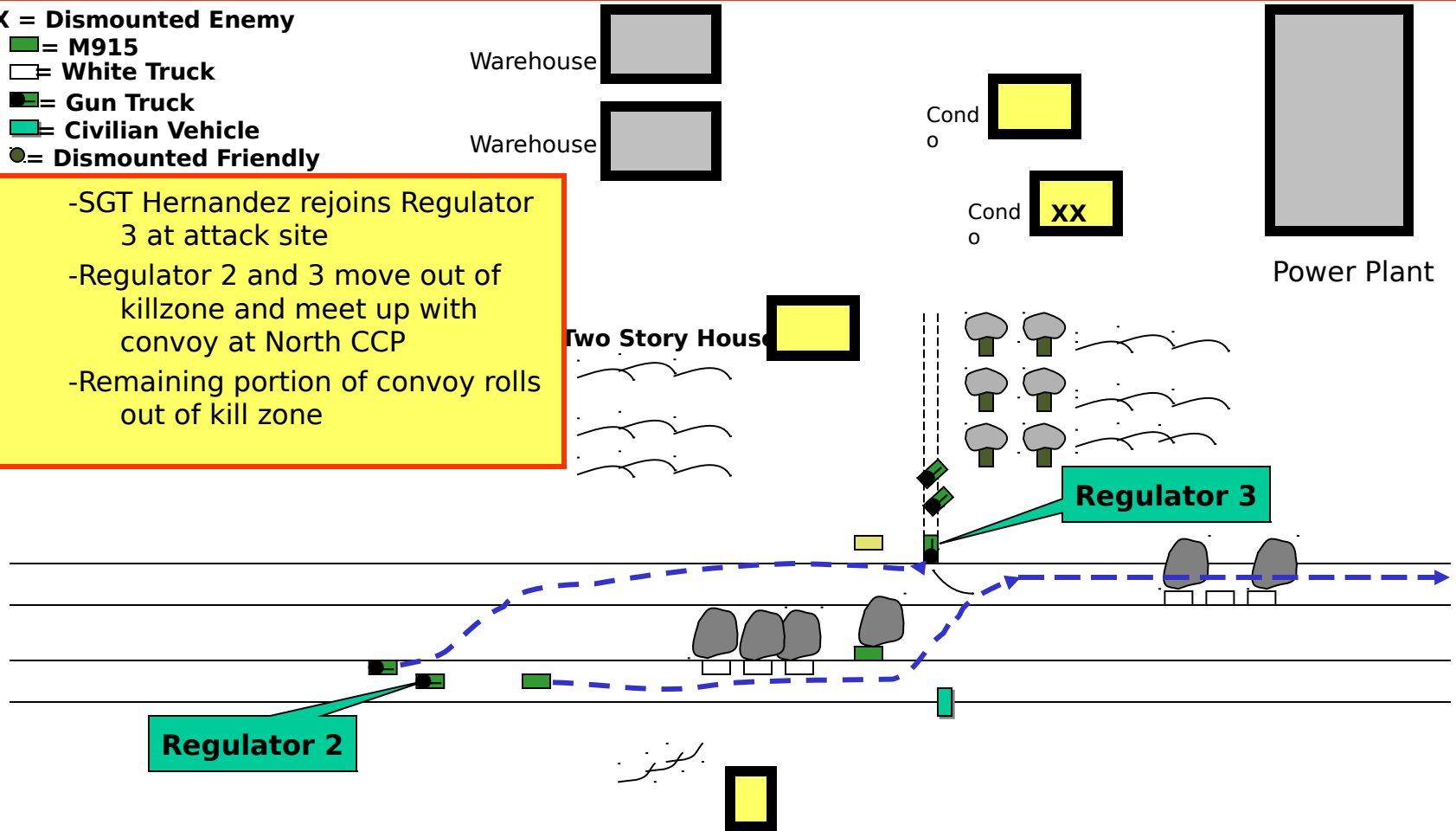
Cond
o

Power Plant

Two Story House

Regulator 3

Regulator 2





Key Convoy Personnel



- SSG Uhl (Convoy Commander)
 - Lead convoy 2 miles out of kill zone and set up secure casualty collection point
- PFC Delancey
 - After being struck twice in the helmet by gun fire and RPG, provided suppressive fire in order to keep the gun fire off of his vehicle and his injured co-driver, inflicting 2-6 casualties on insurgents
- SPC Beck
 - Radioed to convoy commander advising him to stay out of kill zone, extracted SGT Ricketts from his truck, and pulled him to a covered position behind another truck while under fire
- SPC Birkel & SPC Sharples
 - Ran 300-400 meters to front of convoy while under fire to recover SGT Ricketts, lifted him into a white truck, got TCN and DoD drivers remounted and out of kill zone
- SGT Brown
 - Became base of fire with a M249 SAW against insurgent ground assault and developed plan to evacuate the wounded KYNG soldier
- SGT Hernandez
 - Applied first aid to wounded KYNG soldier, assisted in repelling the insurgent ground assault, and evacuated the wounded KYNG to the South CCP
- SPC Schrad
 - Provided suppressive fire along with the CEP positioned in the rear and neutralized enemy position, allowing for the recovery of SGT Ricketts



Lessons Learned



- Pre-convoy
 - Head space and timing of M2 .50 cals
 - Need to test fire weapons
 - War Game TTPs
 - Engage TCNs in the convoy brief
 - Gather intelligence on the enemy
- During convoy
 - Passive and active protection measures
 - Need for In-transit Visibility (ITV) - know who is in the area
 - Gather intelligence on the enemy
- During the ambush
 - METT-TC = clear the kill zone and get to the destination.
 - Proper use of radios
 - Lack of battle hand off between CC and ACC
 - Gun Trucks and convoy need to talk with each other



Questions?

